Sentiment Analysis of Tourist Online Reviews Concerning Lisbon Cultural Patrimony, as a Contribute to the City Attractiveness Evaluation

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Abstract : The tourism sector is increasingly important to the economic performance of countries and a relevant theme to academic research, increasing the importance of understanding how and why tourists evaluate tourism locations. The city of Lisbon is currently a tourist destination of excellence in the European and world-wide panorama, registering a significant growth of the economic weight of its tourist activities in the Gross Added Value of the region. Although there is research on the feedback of those who visit tourist sites and different methodologies for studying tourist sites have been applied, this research seeks to be innovative in the objective of obtaining insights on the competitiveness in terms of attractiveness of the city of Lisbon as a tourist destination, based the feedback of tourists in the Facebook pages of the most visited museums and monuments of Lisbon, an interpretation that is relevant in the development of strategies of tourist attraction. The intangible dimension of the tourism offer, due to its unique condition of simultaneous production and consumption, makes eWOM particularly relevant. The testimony of consumers is thus a decisive factor in the decision-making and buying process in tourism. Online social networks are one of the most used platforms for tourists to evaluate the attractiveness's points of a tourism destination (e.g. cultural and historical heritage), with this user-generated feedback enabling relevant information about the customer-tourists. This information is related to the tourist experience representing the true voice of the customer. Furthermore, this voice perceived by others as genuine, opposite to marketing messages, may have a powerful word-of-mouth influence on other potential tourists. The relevance of online reviews sharing, however, becomes particularly complex, considering social media users' different profiles or the possible and different sources of information available, as well as their associated reputation associated with each source. In the light of these trends, our research focuses on the tourists' feedback on Facebook pages of the most visited museums and monuments of Lisbon that contribute to its attractiveness as a tourism destination. Sentiment Analysis is the methodology selected for this research, using public available information in the online context, which was deemed as an appropriate non-participatory observation method. Data will be collected from two museums (Museu dos Coches and Museu de Arte Antiga) and three monuments ((Mosteiro dos Jerónimos, Torre de Belém and Panteão Nacional) Facebook pages during a period of one year. The research results will help in the evaluation of the considered places by the tourists, their contribution to the city attractiveness and present insights helpful for the management decisions regarding this museums and monuments. The results of this study will also contribute to a better knowledge of the tourism sector, namely the identification of attributes in the evaluation and choice of the city of Lisbon as a tourist destination. Further research will evaluate the Lisbon attraction points for tourists in different categories beyond museums and monuments, will also evaluate the tourist feedback from other sources like TripAdvisor and apply the same methodology in other cities and country regions.

Keywords : Lisbon tourism, opinion mining, sentiment analysis, tourism location attractiveness evaluation